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ABSTRACT

Drawing on questionnaire responses given by 46 universities offering women's studies programs, on information contained in "Media Report to Women" (a monthly publication for women interested in media), and on a variety of books, films, and periodicals, this report identifies the topics concerned with women and the media that are taught in broadcast education courses, the universities that offer the courses, and the materials they use. The report presents lists of course objectives and projects and of specific topics developed in one particular course. It also offers a description of a course on masculine and feminine images in film, including the topics and films covered; and it lists the television programs, periodicals, novels, films, and music that are evaluated by students in a course on the images of women in popular culture. A list of the universities responding to the survey and a bibliography of materials related to the study of women and the media are also provided. (FL)

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Broadcast Education:

Courses on Women, Minorities and the Mass Media

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Courses on "Women and the Media" are diverse and are frequently misunderstood or are an anomaly to those faculty members who have not taken or taught a course on the subject. This paper explores the following areas: What topics are taught in the broadcast education courses on "Women and The Media"? What universities offer courses in this area? What materials do these courses use?

In order to determine what universities offer courses on women and media, a mail survey was made of the 145 universities that have Women's Studies Programs;[1] these universities were the information targets because they were most likely to offer some courses in the general area of women and communication. Of these 145 programs that were surveyed, 46 universities responded (approximately 32%). The universities that did respond provided information on their courses and information on materials used and topics covered in the courses.

Media Report to Women, a monthly publication for women who are interested in both print and electronic media, proved to be a very useful source of information. Media Report sponsors an annual contest for course proposals on "Women and media"; the top prize is $300.00. Media Report presented

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[1]See a list of the responding universities following the text.

the full text of the winning proposal and summaries of many of the 19 proposals in the Honorable Mention category.[2] This proved to be a valuable source since it provided information on courses that students would like to see offered.

In addition to these sources of information, many other materials were examined for their usefullness in a course on women and media. Other materials examined included books, films, periodicals and a variety of materials from popular cultural sources.

The majority of courses were designed with the following goals in mind:

1. To gain insight to the status of women in society by examining the images of females in the media. This goal is based on the notion that the media both reflect and project images of our society; that is, media frequently project society, not as it is, but, as media producers envision it to be. Examination of images in the media allows students an opportunity to see themselves and others from a wider perspective.

2. Many courses include a section on the roles of women in the media industry. This unit allows the students an opportunity to examine media employment figures, media job descriptions and to read reports by and about women who actually work in the media.

3. Another section may include an examination of some of the contemporary issues involving media owners,

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[2]See Media Report to Women for February, March, April, May, June, July and August, 1977. Media Report to Women 3306 Ross Place, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20008. Subscription rate is $10.00 per year.

producers, managers and women's groups. This unit allows the students an opportunity to review FCC regulations and to use a variety of media materials including Broadcasting, Access, Media Report to Women, professional newsletters and periodicals. This exploration of contemporary issues provides the students with insights concerning issues that broadcast managers and producers face.

4. A fourth unit may allow each student to complete a course project. The options may include:

A. A student may be allowed to undertake a monitoring project of broadcast programming to determine How women, men and/or minorities are presented in various program formats. This project may be followed by a discussion of formulaic plot structures or writing styles that determine roles for men and women.

B. A student may write a script for a television pilot series that would attempt to present non-sexist and non-stereotypical roles for men, women and minorities. The script would be read and discussed in class to determine how successful the student was with the project and to gain information from the student concerning the difficulties involved in writing non-sexist and non-stereotypical materials that could actually be marketable.

C. A student may spend a short internship with a woman who works in media management, production, news or performance. The student would keep a daily record of the internship and would present a report to the class.

D. The student may complete a detailed report on a contemporary issue involving women and/or minorities and the media. The report would be considered a major paper and would be summarized to the class for discussion.

E. A group of students may be allowed to produce a new-format program for women or minorities. The production could be done in the studio or could utilize a small media format. The program could be designed for a popular audience or for an educational or industrial audience.

5. The final goal of the course is usually, with all of the above input, to consider the future of women and media.

Of the universities that responded to the mail survey, the following course titles were used; some courses are directly related to broadcasting while other courses cover a more general overview of the entire spectrum of media or are limited to one particular medium.

-"Contemporary Issues in Mass Communication: Women and the Media"

-"Women and the New Video"

-"Sexism and Broadcasting"

-"Women in Theatre"

-"Feminine and Masculine Images in Film"

-"Women in Media and Education"

-"Male and Female in American Literature and Culture"

-"Women in Mass Communications"

-"Community Video: Feminist Film"

-"Women and Broadcasting"

-"Images of Women in Popular Culture"

-"Communication and the Sexes"

-"Interpersonal Communication Between Women and Men"

-"Women and Journalism"

-"Communication Patterns Between Women and Men"

-"Men and Women in Politics, Science and Popular Culture"

These courses cover a wide variety of topics and most of the courses attempt to meet the five general goals as stated above. One course, for example, develops the following specific topics.[3]

1. Basic definitions of sexism and sex-role stereotyping.

2. Historical background of sex-roles in broadcasting

3. Sex as an audience demographic.

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[3]These course topics are from a course taught at the University of Arizona.

4. Sex-role stereotyping in programming.

   A. News

   B. Entertainment

   C. Public affairs

   D. Educational and instructional media

   E. Children's media

5. Sexual discrimination in employment

   A. Sexism and the law

   B. License renewal

   C. Fairness doctrine

   D. E.E.O.

One course on masculine and feminine images in film surveys "the image of men and women and changing sexual roles in film from the silent era to the present. Heroines, heroes and their relationship to culture are studied by viewing representative feature films. Content and form as applied to gender identification [is] analyzed in historical and social context. Topics in this course are discussed after viewing

specific films."[4] The topics and films include:

1. Women as Innocent Victims

   A. "Way Down East"

   B. "King Kong"

2. Women as destroyers of men and civilization

   A. "Cat People"

   B. "Kiss Me Deadly"

3. Heroes--Men as Adventurers, Civilizers, Questors

   A. "High Noon"

   B. "Misfits"

4. Heroes and Heroines--As Civilizing Forces on Each Other

   A. "Meet John Doe"

   B. "Smouldering Fires"

5. Reexamination of Macho/Tough Guy Definition of masculinity

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[4]These course topics are from a course taught at L. A. Harbor College.

A. "Rebel Without a Cause"

B. "Kiss Me Deadly"

6. Lovers and Friends--Working Together for Survival

A. "Hobson's Choice"

B. "African Queen"

One course on the "Images of Women in Popular Culture" requires the students to use and evaluate a variety of popular culture art forms including:[5]

TV Programs

1. "Search for Tomorrow"
2. "Charlie's Angels"
3. "Three's Company"
4. "The Jeffersons"
5. "Police Woman"
6. "Bionic Woman"
7. "Baretta"

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[5]This information is from a course taught at the University of California at - Davis.

Popular Literature and Periodicals

1. Ladies Home Journal
2. Seventeen
3. Playboy

Films

1. "The Demon Seed"
2. "A Star is Born"

Popular Literature/Novels

1. Looking for Mr. Goodbar

Popular Music

1. A variety of popular music provided on records and tapes

One course used the mass media as the channel of communication in a course titled "Introduction to Changing Women." The course announcement read: "A radio class! The lecture portion of "Introduction to Changing Women" will be aired every Monday and Wednesday nights throughout the

semester."[6]

The materials used in the courses are as diverse as the specific topics covered in the courses. The bibliography indicates some of the materials used in these courses.

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[6]This description is from a Women's Studies course taught at California State University, Fresno, California.

Responding Universities

The following list indicates the universities that responded to the questionnaire. A * indicates that the university offeres a course on women and the media.

Research Center for Women
Alverno College
3401 S. 39 Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53215

*Women's Studies Program
The University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona 85721

The Women's Center
Barnard College
Columbia University
New York, N. Y. 10027

Women's Studies Program
Brooklyn College
Bedford Avenue and Avenue H
Brooklyn, New York 11210

*California State University
5151 State University Drive
Los Angeles, California 90032

*American Studies
University of California
Davis, California 95616

Women's Studies
The University of California
405 Hilgard Ave.
Los Angeles, California 90024

Women's Studies
University of California, Berkeley
301 Campbell Hall
Berkeley , California 94720

*Women's Studies Program
San Ramon 3, Room 107
California State University
Fresno, California 93740

*Women's Studies
California State University-Sacramento
6000 J Street
Sacramento, Calif. 95819

Women's Studies Program
The University of Connecticut Box U-181
Storrs, Connecticut 06268

*Department of Communication
College of Arts and Sciences
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware 19711

*Women's Studies
Douglass College
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903

Institute for Women
Florida International University
State University of Florida
Miami, Florida 33144

*Feminist Studies Program
Goddard-Cambridge
Graduate Program in Social Change
166 Hampshire St.
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Women's Studies

The George Washington University
2025 I. St., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20052

Women's Studies
College of Cultural Studies
Govenor's State University
Park Forest South, Illinois 60466

Women's Studies Program
Spalding 252, 2540 Maile Way
University of Hawaii 96822

Henderson State University
Arkadelphia, Arkansas 71923

*Women's Studies
Humboldt State University
Arcata, California 95521

Women's Studies Program
Hunter College
659 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Women's Studies Program
Memorial Hall East, Room 128
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

*Women's Studies
Indiana University- Purdue University at Fort Wayne
Trom II
Room 16
Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805

*Women's Studies Program
305 English-Philosophy Building
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

*L.A. Harbor College
1111 Figueroa Place
Wilmington, California 90744

*Women Studies Program
Lower Columbia College
Longview, Washington 98632

*The University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas 66045

Women's Studies
University of Massachusetts-Boston
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Women's Studies Program
The University of Michigan
1058 L. S. & A. Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Women's Studies Program
Mills College
Oakland, California 94613

*Women's Studies Program
The University of New Mexica
Albuquerque, New Mexica 87131

*Women's Studies
School of Arts and Sciences
College of New Rochelle
New Rochelle, New York 10801

*Office of Women's Studies
134 Derby Hall
154 North Oval Mall
Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Women's Studies Program
University of Pittsburgh
1012 Cathredral of Learning
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15260

Queens College
Flushing, N. Y. 11367

Sarah Lawrence College
Bronxville, New York 10708

*The University of South Florida
Tampa, Florida

*Program for the Study of Women and Men in Society
University of Southern California
University Park
Los Angeles, California 90007

Women's Studies
Wesleyan University
Middletown, Connecticut 06457

*The University of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

Women's Studies
Wichita State University
Wichita, Kansas 67208

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Streicher, Helen, "The Girls in Cartoons," Journal of Communications, 24:2, 1974.

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Employment

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Film

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